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SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT AND REPORTING DIVISION

ANALYSIS OF
SCHOOL JURISDICTION
2001-2002

ANNUAL EDUCATION
RESULTS REPORTS

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For further information, contact

System Improvement and Reporting Division
9th Floor, Commerce Place
10155 102 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4L5

Telephone (780) 422-8671
Toll free in Alberta by dialing 310-0000
Fax: (780) 422-8345
Email: sig@learning.gov.ab.ca

This document is intended primarily for:

System and School Administrators
Alberta Learning Executive Team and Managers

And may be of interest to:

Teachers
Parents
Education Stakeholders
Community Members

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This 2001-02 report, the sixth in a series of Annual Education Result Reports (AERRs) summary reports, places an emphasis on stimulating achievement by reinforcing the reporting relationships and alignment of Ministry and jurisdiction planning through examination of the extant issues and priorities identified by school boards. Key observations within this report are relevant to the 2001-02 reporting period, but the reader is cautioned to consider subsequent developments with the accountability system, such as development of the accountability pillar under the Renewed Funding Framework. The key themes noted within include the following:

1. The provincial priorities are fully represented in the school board 2001-02 AERRs while a high percentage of boards (74%) include reporting on optional local priorities.
2. Based on the percent of boards reporting improvements from 2000-01 in each priority area, gains are observed for increasing high school completion rates, little change is reported in improving secondary student achievement in math or in local priorities, while declines are noted in improving coordination of services for children, improving access to information technology and in improving public satisfaction with education. Overall, no one area can be described as being sufficiently implemented that it could be removed from the current list of priorities.
3. With regard to reporting on required performance measures and based on the data available (Tables 4 and 5), responsiveness to the required student achievement measures showed a trend toward continued improvement. However, compliance should be at or near 100% (some requirements are not applicable to all jurisdictions). Cohort reporting continues to be problematic for 23% of the boards and 35% of boards did not explicitly report high school completion rates.
4. Jurisdictions' assessments of results demonstrated further improvement for goals 1 and 2 relative to the 2000-01 reporting period whereas declines were reported for Goals 3 and 4.
5. For Goal 1:
 - Programming appears to be one of the major focal points for jurisdictions and an ongoing challenge in the evolving education system with new needs arising, especially for students with special needs and for Aboriginal students.
6. For Goal 2:
 - Concerns about achievement in specific subjects/grades (especially in high school mathematics, but also in Language Arts) were reiterated throughout AERRs. Practices linked to implementing Goal 2 identified in this report need to be a part of long-term strategizing in planning for long-term results.
 - The data indicates that at least half of jurisdictions used the then current 85/15 provincial standards in setting their own targets for student achievement. A sample of six 2002-03 AERRs indicates a tendency to continue using the old 85/15 standards as opposed to reporting on the jurisdictions own, contextually derived standards. This application is receiving close attention under the new accountability pillar.
5. For Goals 3 and 4:
 - Preparing children for learning was the challenge most frequently mentioned by the jurisdictions. Continuing work on programs (including using Alberta Initiative for School Improvement [AISI]) and partnerships were mentioned as avenues for resolving this issue.
 - In many jurisdictions, especially in the southern zones of the province, partnerships are diversified and working well.
8. School boards perceive Early Literacy and AISI as being the most effective initiatives, followed by programs for special needs students, the Student Health Initiative and English as a Second Language (ESL). Jurisdictions believe there has been more improvement in both AISI and Early Literacy compared to ESL, where the least improvement was observed.
9. Recommendations based on this report include the following:
 - More leadership in developing the readiness to learn strategies and outcomes will be needed from Alberta Learning to provide more focus and direction in this area.

- A study to identify the factors that contribute to the high degree of successful Student Health Initiative partnerships in the three southern zones of the province should be undertaken.
- ESL programming continues to provide a challenge for many school boards. This area should become a focus for research and development by Alberta Learning.
- Continued emphasis should be placed on refinement and improvement of the reporting side of the accountability framework, especially the inclusion of provincial achievement test data for student cohorts and high school completion rates. Likewise, target setting by school boards should become more reflective of local contexts and thereby more relevant to local planners. Alberta Learning should consider sponsoring in-service training sessions for jurisdiction staff to improve these reporting areas.

INTRODUCTION

School jurisdiction Annual Education Results Reports (AERRs) are reviewed and analyzed annually by Alberta Learning to help achieve three key purposes of accountability for basic education:

- 1) Support evaluation and reporting on goal achievement for basic education.
- 2) Support continuous improvement in basic education.
- 3) Align Ministry and jurisdiction planning and reporting and reinforce compliance with the fundamental accountability requirements.

The 2001-02 report reflects these three purposes by reinforcing the reporting relationships and alignment of Ministry and jurisdiction planning through examination of the extant issues and priorities identified by school boards with the objective of stimulating continuous improvement of the basic education system.

The evaluation and reporting efforts of school jurisdictions continue to be confirmed through bi-annual meetings between the Field Services Branch and school jurisdiction central office administrators. Out of this dialogue the content, conclusions and themes detailed within this report are verified and any non-compliant issues are followed-up by Field Services. Conclusions and themes identified in this report are based on content analysis of the summary and review forms and thus are based primarily on qualitative analysis, but where feasible response patterns are quantified and presented as quantitative data.

This report is the sixth in a series of summary reports of school jurisdiction AERRs. Key observations within this report are relevant to the 2001-02 reporting period, but the reader is cautioned to consider subsequent developments with the accountability system, such as development of the accountability pillar under the Renewed Funding Framework.

As is noted in the overview of results achieved relative to Goal 1, High Quality Learning Opportunities, foreseeing long-term local, provincial and global trends in education is imperative for jurisdictions' strategic planning. Even if the results appear to be satisfactory for today's situation, "will it be good enough for those students who will graduate in 2010?" "It is much more desirable (and easier) to make changes before there is a crisis ..." Cooperation and sharing information and experience with the Ministry and among the jurisdictions contributes to the awareness of and preparedness for the future developments and challenges. Herein lies the significance of these summary reports.

PROVINCIAL AND BOARD PRIORITY AREAS

Five priority areas for basic education have been consistent reporting expectations for school boards over the past five AERR reporting periods. The patterns of the School Board reporting of progress and accomplishments regarding these priorities and initiatives from 1997-1998 to 2001-02 are noted in Table 1. 'Percent Reported' represents the percent of school boards that reported on the implementation of each provincial priority in their AERR. The provincial priorities are fully represented in the school board 2001-02 AERRs while a high percentage of boards (74%) include reporting on optional local priorities.

Table 1 – Provincial Priorities (n = 62 Jurisdictions in 2001-02)

Priority Area	Percent Reported				
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Secondary Math	73%	58%	82%	94%	100%
High School Completion	78%	57%	87%	97%	100%
Coordination of Services for Children	75%	75%	86%	98%	100%
Access to Technology	78%	75%	86%	98%	100%
Public Satisfaction	N/A	62%	66%	98%	100%
Board Identified Priorities*	58%	28%	68%	77%	74%

*optional

School boards reported on the results achieved for each provincial priority and made a judgment on whether their results indicated improvement, no change, or a decline in achieving the outcomes associated with each provincial priority. Boards also had the option of reporting that they had insufficient data to make a judgment regarding the status of the priority area. These progress judgments are typically based on a qualitative assessment of results achieved, but may be based on a consideration of both qualitative and quantitative data. School board staff were asked two additional questions with implications for Departmental planning related to each provincial priority: how are you using these results to inform your planning, and how can Alberta Learning help you improve your results? The percentages for each reporting category as well as the content analysis of the responses to the two questions are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 – Priority Area Results and Implications for Planning

Priority Area	Results (%)* 2000-01 2001-02			Implications for Planning
Improving Secondary Student Achievement in Math	Measures indicate Improvement 68% No change 14% Decline 5% Insufficient data 13%		68% 18% 10% 5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most common strategy (66%) being incorporated into board plans for improving secondary math focused on improving staff specializations and/or alternative math teaching strategies often linked to program adjustments premised on previous gains. About 20% of boards focus extensively on analysis of provincial achievement test and/or diploma exam results as a primary strategy for informing education planning to improve math results. • The most common recommendation (26%) to Alberta Learning for helping school boards improve math results centered on suggestions to review the curriculum content and/or articulation of the math program especially for grade 9. This recommendation was followed by requests (23%) for greater assistance with implementation of new programs such as research on best practices.
Increasing High School Completion Rates	Measures indicate Improvement 45% No change 15% Decline 2% Insufficient data 38%		65% 21% 5% 10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 90% of school boards reported implementing specific actions or placing an emphasis on school-level supports such as improving program choice, emphasizing course completions, focusing on principal leadership to improve completion rates, career counseling, etc. The strong emphasis being given this priority may explain the increase in jurisdictions reporting improvement in implementing this priority. • The most frequent suggestions (19%) to Alberta Learning were to expand the tracking of students who return to the basic or post-secondary education system after 2 or 3 years and/or to track specific sub-groups of students such as Aboriginal and ESL students. Eleven percent of boards called for more research and reporting on best practices and strategies for increasing parental support, retaining Aboriginal students and on balancing cognitive with affective student needs.
Improving Coordination of Services for Children	Measures indicate Improvement 76% No change 13% Decline 2% Insufficient data 10%		60% 21% 10% 10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School boards split into two distinct groups in reporting on this priority; 32% reported low parent satisfaction with services provided to students with special needs or concerns with Student Health Initiative Program (SHIP) partnerships such as high administrative costs or problems with “regionalization” of SHIP services. A second group (56%) of boards reported satisfaction with services provided or commented that SHIP or Program Unit Funding (PUF) was working to improve services to students. Interestingly the highest proportion of satisfied boards (84%) were in the three southern zones of the province. • The most frequent suggestions (24%) to Alberta Learning were calls to reinforce or strengthen existing SHIP programs to ensure speech-language, Occupational Therapist or Physical Therapist specialist services were available. Thirteen percent of boards called on provincial departments to improve inter-departmental communications, leadership or coordination; and an equal number of boards called for centralizing administrative authority of SHIP within the school boards to improve administrative efficiencies.

Improving Access to Information Technology	Measures indicate Improvement No change Decline Insufficient data	84% 11% 2% 4%	68% 16% 6% 10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although the percent of boards reporting improvement in this priority area declined from last year, a high proportion of boards (79%) reported explicit Information and Communications Technology (ICT) action plan initiatives and/or focused staff coaching on ICT implementation. A possible explanation for the decline in the percent of boards reporting improvement can be found in the 39% of boards calling on Alberta Learning to allocate more funds for ICT implementation and innovation with some boards estimating ICT implementation costs between \$200 and \$300 per student. An additional 15% of school boards called on Alberta Learning to provide more leadership in ICT implementation with more curriculum materials, issue based workshops and teacher training. Several boards complemented the Ministry for the leadership already provided in areas such as LearnAlberta.ca , the National Geographic resource and the Supernet.
Improving Public Satisfaction with Education	Measures indicate Improvement No change Decline Insufficient data	64% 29% 3% 4%	40% 45% 5% 10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite the decline in the percent of board reporting improvement, 77% of the boards reported implementing specific strategies such as on-going survey analysis, home visits, better parent communication, etc. to improve public satisfaction with education and an additional 10% reported satisfaction with existing levels of public satisfaction and a maintenance strategy. Fifteen percent of the boards urged Alberta Learning to be more proactive in communicating good news, but realistic stories; and an additional 13% suggested improved funding to stimulate public satisfaction. Additional ideas proffered by a few boards included assistance with survey development and/or comparative survey data analysis or more engagement by Ministry staff with school-level operations.
Local Priorities (top priority)	Measures indicate Improvement No change Decline Insufficient data	55% 6% 5% 34%	58% 11% 5% 26%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twenty-six unique local priorities were identified by school boards, which indicates the range of uniqueness and diversity present at the jurisdiction level. The most common local priorities in decreasing order of frequency included: focusing on specific grades or subjects to improve student achievement, ensuring Catholicity/Christian faith is present in the (Catholic) schools, ensuring safe and caring schools, improving teaching via professional development, and improving special needs programming by focusing on early intervention or gifted programs. There was no clear pattern of suggestions for Alberta Learning in the area of local priorities, but some intriguing suggestions called on the Ministry to assist jurisdictions in the functional assessment of students, to simplify and blend accountability and AISI reporting, and to coordinate information on what jurisdictions are doing to improve student achievement – a potential function of this report.

* In some cases percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

A further analysis of the results achieved for provincial priorities as judged by jurisdiction staff was done by weighting each response category as follows: improvement = 3, no change = 2, decline = 1. If a jurisdiction indicated insufficient data = 0 they were not included in this analysis. In all, forty-five jurisdictions provided responses for all five priority areas. The means and standard deviations were calculated and are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 – Weighted Measures of Priority Implementation (n = 45)

Priority	Mean*	SD
Secondary Math	2.64	.609
High School Completion	2.67	.564
Coordination of Services	2.60	.618
Access to Technology	2.69	.633
Public Satisfaction	2.40	.618

* improvement = 3, no change = 2, decline = 1

Summary

Implementation of the five provincial priorities for basic education is not a static process. After five years of effort full compliance by school boards in reporting on the status of these priority areas is observed. Based on the percent of boards reporting improvements from 2000-01 in each priority area, gains are reported for increasing high school completion rates, little change is reported in improving secondary student achievement in math or in local priorities, while declines are noted in improving coordination of services for children, improving access to information technology and in improving public satisfaction with education. When these data are converted to descriptive statistics (Table 3) some interesting patterns in relationship to each priority are observed.

The anecdotal information contained in the content analysis of school board comments relative to each priority area is more meaningful than the quantitative indicators alone can provide. Overall, this analysis suggests boards are giving considerable attention to implementing strategies to advance the provincial priorities, but no one area can be described as being sufficiently implemented so that it could be removed from the current list of priorities. Considerable attention should, therefore, be expended within Alberta Learning, in consultation with stakeholders, regarding identification of optimal strategies to further advance these priority areas.

RESULTS ACHIEVED AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

AERRs were reviewed to assess the degree of compliance over time with reporting of specific performance measures by school boards. The results of this analysis are reported in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4 – Inclusion of Required Performance Measures in AERRs

Results Measure	Percent 1997-98 (n=60)	Percent 1998-99 (n=60)	Percent 1999-00 (n=60)	Percent 2000-01 (n=62)	Percent 2001-02 (n=62)
1. Percentage of students who achieved acceptable standard/standard of excellence on provincial achievement tests:					
• Based on those writing (5 years of data)	93%	90%	92%	92%	97%
• Based on cohort (5 years of data)	N/A	58%	70%	74%	77%
2. Percentage of students who achieved acceptable standard/standard of excellence on diploma exams.	97%	88%	95%	94%	98%
3. Percentage of students who achieved jurisdiction targets on provincial achievement tests and diploma exams (explicitly stated).	N/A	67%	73%	89%	94%
4. Participation rates: percentage of students in grades 3, 6 and 9 who wrote provincial achievement tests and participation of students in diploma exam courses:					
• Achievement tests	85%	98%	95%	97%	No data
• Diploma Exams	93%	92%	90%	90%	No data
5. High school completion rates (jurisdiction and provincial)	-	-	-	-	65%
6. Of jurisdictions with local goals percent reporting measures*	42%	75%	68%	56%	55%

*Local goals are optional, but measures are required if local goals are identified.

The results of reporting on the new provincial goals and local goals in 2001-02 are presented in Table 5 below in comparison with the previous, 2000-01 reporting year.

Table 5 – Reporting / Assessing Results on Provincial and Local Goals (62 Jurisdictions)

Goals	PMs Reported		Assessment of the results 2000-01				Assessment of the results 2001-02			
	2000-01	2001-02	Impr. *	No change	Decline	Ins. / Mis. Data*	Impr. *	No change	Decline	Ins. / Mis. Data*
Goal 1 outcomes:			61%	24%	5%	10%	71%	24%	0%	5%
• Responsive & flexible	97%	90%								
• Accessible	92%	85%								
• Financial need not a barrier	N/A	76%								
• Affordable	73%	81%								
Goal 2 outcomes:			58%	23%	3%	16%	61%	31%	5%	3%
• Provincial PMs	See Table 4									
• Other local measures re: goal 2	42%	40%								
Goal 3 outcomes:			73%	14%	2%	11%	68%	19%	0%	13%
• Children ready to learn	73%	85%								
• Lifelong learning	79%	85%								
• Prepared for Work	81%	87%								
• Citizenship	77%	84%								
Goal 4 outcomes:			74%	6%	0%	10%	65%	24%	2%	10%
• Partnerships	92%	92%								
• Joint initiatives	85%	90%								
Local goal measures	56%	55%	N/A				N/A			

* Abbreviations: Impr. – improvement; Ins./Mis. Data – insufficient or missing data; PMs – performance measures.

Summary

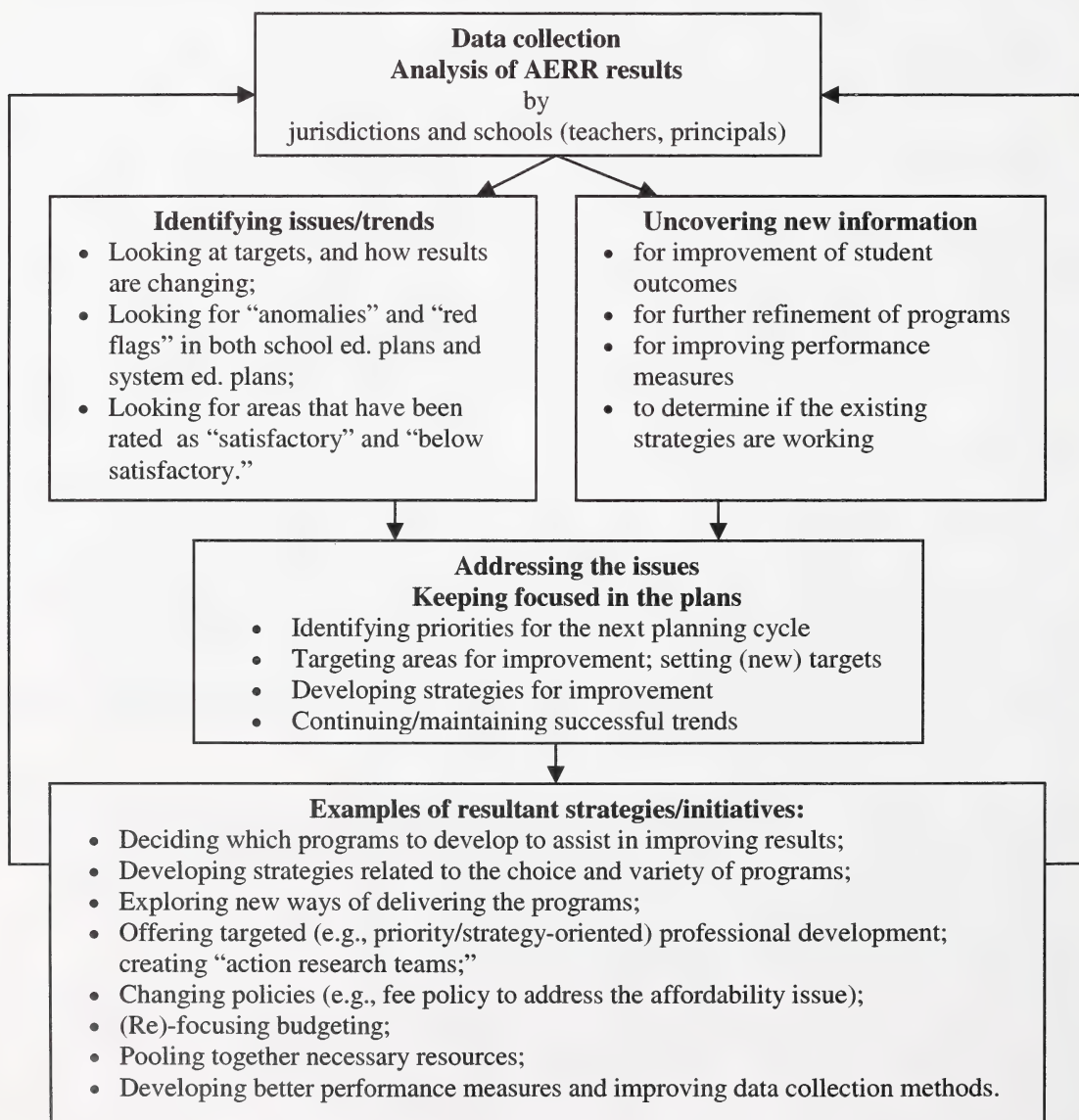
Based on the data available, responsiveness to the required student achievement measures (Table 4) showed a tendency towards further improvement in comparison to the previous reporting periods, although compliance should be 100% and cohort reporting continues to be problematic for 23% of the boards. Hence, there is still room for improvement. Reporting of local goals and performance measures (55%) was consistent with local goals and measures in 2000-01 AERRs. The data on participation rates in Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) and diploma exams were not included in the 2001-02 AERR summary forms as this information is reflected in the cohort reporting requirement. New information on reporting high school completion rates was introduced. In total, only 65% of the jurisdictions included explicit information on high school completion in their AERRs.

Jurisdictions' assessments of the results achieved for each of the provincial goals, are detailed in Table 5. Approximately two-thirds or more of the jurisdictions indicated improvement in the results. The highest percentage of jurisdictions reported improvement for Goal 1 (71%), which was an increase compared to the 2000-01 AERRs (61%). While Goal 2 showed the lowest level of improvement compared to other goals, the higher proportion of jurisdictions indicated improvement on this goal (61%) compared to the preceding reporting period (58% for 2000-01 AERRs). At the same time, lower percentages of jurisdictions perceived improvement in their results in the 2001-02 reporting period for Goals 3 and 4 compared to the 2000-01 AERR summaries. This could be explained by switching focus on maintaining already achieved results (i.e., reporting “no change” in the results). Finally, there was improvement in reporting of insufficient and/or missing data for goal 1 and 2 in 2001-02 in comparison with 2000-01. These results could be a reflection of refinements in performance measures and data collection methods.

USING AERR RESULTS IN PLANNING FOR PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL GOALS

Field services managers asked superintendents, “How do you use your (AERR) results to influence your strategic planning?” (The same question was applied to all 4 Provincial and additional Local goals). It was clear from the content analysis of jurisdictions’ answers to this question that they generally attached much importance to data collection and incorporating “a review of results into (the) division planning cycle.” The diagram in Figure 1 reflects general patterns of using AERR information in the jurisdiction planning, and is a composite summary of information provided by jurisdictions on Provincial and Local Goals. The following analyses of results for individual goals reflect general features illustrated in Figure 1 as well as capture specific focal points for each of the goals.

Figure 1 - Utilizing AERR Results in Jurisdictions’ Three-Year Education Plan Cycle



GOAL 1 – HIGH QUALITY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

As mentioned earlier, field services managers asked superintendents, **“How do you use your (AERR) results to influence your strategic planning?”** The jurisdictions’ answers related to Goal 1 boiled down to the major focus areas shown in Table 6.¹

Table 6 – Responses to “How do you use your results to influence ...?” (Goal 1)

	n (%)
Emphasis on data collection and analysis of results to inform the planning process	25 (40%)
Using results to develop (alternative/choice) programs (all types of programs)	17 (27%)
Focusing specifically on improving services for Special Needs and Aboriginal students	13 (21%)
Using results for addressing the affordability issue	16 (26%)
Using results to address community needs and work on partnerships	9 (15%)
Using results in providing professional development for teachers	7 (11%)

The critical role of data collection and analysis of results in jurisdictions’ strategic planning: In general, jurisdictions’ comments attested to the importance of maintaining “the cycle of planning” described by one of them as “plan, do, check and then act.” Data collection and analysis of results play a key role in this cycle (40% of jurisdictions indicated that their education plans are data/result driven). According to the jurisdictions, a combination of results from (satisfaction) surveys, achievement tests, diploma exams and information from other sources (e.g., focus groups and stakeholders workshops) constitute the base for planning for Goal 1 (i.e., revealing the issues and making decisions to improve schools and student outcomes). As illustrated in Figure 1, analysis of results and decision-making represent a collective effort on the part of the schools (i.e., teachers and principals) and system administrators.

Using results to develop (alternative/choice) programs: Seventeen percent (17%) of jurisdictions commented on using results for making decisions on delivering programs that address student needs and assist in improving student outcomes. An assortment of programs mentioned included:

- moving to full day Kindergarten;
- a full range of K-12 programming for all students including Career and Technology Studies (CTS) programming; designing the CTS mobile trailer to support CTS courses in small rural schools;
- operating “storefront” programs including supports for Home education;
- operating Early Literacy Initiative (ELI), English as a Second Language (ESL) and special needs programs; expanding the Gifted Program;
- developing innovative enhanced programming in collaboration with inner city schools;
- providing Fresh Start program, Student Services Summer Institute and Kids in Need project that provides breakfast, clothing, recreational opportunities and a summer program;
- establishing Outreach, on-line, Tech. Prep. and Partnership programs;
- offering Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and locally developed courses;
- second language program development, continued growth in French Immersion;
- establishing the Comprehensive School Guidance and Counseling Program;
- introducing mandated daily Physical Education; and
- initiating Bully Awareness programs.

¹ The jurisdictions provide answers at their discretion to the mentioned *open-ended* general question, so that their answers are not structured by a priori categories and respondents were free to discuss/comment on any issues they deemed to be important. Therefore, the numbers and percentages in summary tables account for the jurisdictions that touched upon a common topic, but do not indicate that some jurisdictions considered but did not select certain aspects in their planning.

In addition to the cited programs, jurisdictions discussed more broadly developing services and resources for special needs students (e.g., inclusion in regular classrooms) and Aboriginal students. The latter initiative is reflected in tuition agreements with the First Nations and establishing specialized committees (such as the Aboriginal Achievement committee) that will focus on improving (education) opportunities for Aboriginal students. In some instances, affordability is noted as an issue in expanding services for Aboriginal and special needs students.

The results were also used for addressing the education affordability issue, providing professional development for teachers, addressing community needs and working on partnerships (Table 6).

Highlights

- ❑ *Programming* appears to be one of the major focal points in jurisdictions' planning for providing high quality learning opportunities for their students. While it appears that many jurisdictions were "generating good results in this area," the comments indicate that programming is an ongoing challenge in the evolving education system with new needs arising. Improving opportunities for special needs students and Aboriginal students were repeatedly mentioned by jurisdictions as urgent issues.
- ❑ *Foreseeing long-term local and system trends in education* is imperative for jurisdictions' strategic planning. Even if the results appear to be satisfactory for today's situation, "will it be good enough for those students who will graduate in 2010?" "It is much more desirable (and easier) to make changes before there is a crisis ..." Cooperation and sharing information and experience with the Ministry and among the jurisdictions could contribute to the awareness of and preparedness for the future developments and challenges.

GOAL 2 – EXCELLENCE IN LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT

The following questions were posed to the jurisdictions with respect of provincial Goal 2 – "Excellence in Learner Achievement:"

- **"How do you use your (AERR) results to influence your strategic planning?"** (The same question was posed in the summaries for all other goals).
- **"How do you use these results to inform future planning?"** (This question referred specifically to the "Learners complete programs" outcome.
- In addition, jurisdictions were asked if they used any local measures in planning for Goal 2 and if so, to list these measures.

Jurisdictions' answers are summarized below according to the listed questions.

Using AERR Results to Influence Strategic Planning

Using achievement results to inform (strategic) planning: Consistent with their answers to the identical question for Goal 1, a notable proportion of jurisdictions (61%, Table 7) confirmed that analysis of student achievement results (PATs, Diploma Exams and other) provides "new information for improving students outcomes," identifies "areas needing further emphasis" and informs strategic planning both at a jurisdiction and school scale. "Top-to-bottom" alignment of data analysis and planning involves joint efforts of jurisdictions and schools. The jurisdictions establish general priorities and initiate a Jurisdiction Improvement Plan as a result of "a divisional analysis of the results." The latter is shared with the schools which, in turn, do "site-level analyses" and develop parallel strategies for improvement that support overall jurisdiction targets. There was evidence of collaborative team work, such as "collegial discussions" of achievement results at different levels among jurisdictions, principals, schools' staff, school councils, and other stakeholders, followed by priority setting for developing action/improvement

plans. Specific outcomes of the result analyses were schools reviewing their instructional focus, developing curriculum teams and examining more effective grade configurations to improve student learning and jurisdictions working with “low performing” schools (in a grade or specific subject) to help them develop improvement plans.

Table 7 – Responses to “How do you use your results to influence ...?” (Goal 2)

	n (%)
Analyzing achievement results/trends at the jurisdiction and school level to identify areas for improvement and inform (strategic) planning	38 (61%)
Specific result-related issues mentioned:	
• Need for improvement in individual subject areas (mostly Math, but also Language Arts)	16 (26%)
• Need for improvement in participation rates in achievement tests and diploma exams	5 (8%)
Utilizing AISI projects for improving achievement and generating best practices	13 (21%)
Using results to inform/direct professional development	7 (11%)
Drawing attention to long-range results: Monitoring of/working on students’ <i>early progress</i> to strengthen results in later grades	6 (10%)

Specific issues brought up in the results: Referring to the analysis of results, 26% of the jurisdictions focused specifically on individual subjects (mostly Math, especially Grade 9, and also Language Arts) as significant areas needing improvement. In addition, 8% of jurisdictions brought up the issue of low achievement tests and diploma exams participation rates, which compromise the usefulness of achievement results. The most frequent reason for low participation mentioned by the jurisdictions was some parents requesting that their children do not write tests “for philosophical reasons.”

Using results of AISI projects to improve achievement and spread best practices: Just over one-fifth of jurisdictions (21%) reported using AISI as the means of addressing achievement issues in various subjects and grades. For example, AISI projects were utilized for focusing on early literacy, improving results in junior high mathematics (e.g., by providing differentiated instruction) and English Language Arts. Analysis of achievement results provides a context for next AISI proposals and, vice versa, “AISI results are analyzed for best practices.” The positive AISI results can be implemented and shared in areas such as literacy practices, expanding full-time kindergarten into all schools, math programming, and so on.

Envisioning/planning for long-term results: Apart from the references to AISI, 10% of the jurisdictions stressed focusing on *long-term results* and early learning intervention. While mostly pointing out concrete measures to assist student transition from home to school and from early to higher grades (programs and initiatives such as early identification of students with learning difficulties, expanded pre-school, all day kindergarten, Early Literacy, ESL and so on), the jurisdictions also stressed strategizing by focusing on “long-range results” to “improve standards within the system.” Put another way, early learning initiatives should be viewed in the broader context of an integral process of life-long learning with excellence in learner achievement built gradually “from the bottom up” (i.e., making sure that students in primary grades receive a strong grounding in the basic skills for strengthening results in later grades). As exemplified by one of the jurisdictions, “Early Literacy Initiatives in K-3 affect Grade 6 Language Arts, Social Studies and Science in the next five years. These Early Learning Initiatives will affect Grade 9 Language Arts, Social Studies and Science in ten years.”

Using results to inform professional development: Eleven percent (11%) of the jurisdictions mentioned using their results for making decisions about teacher/staff training. A key notion following from jurisdictions’ comments is that professional development should support jurisdictions’ efforts towards providing greater opportunities for students and be focused on/aligned with strategies addressing the areas of need. Promoting teacher participation in field testing and achievement/diploma marking was mentioned as one of the professional growth tools.

Benchmarking the results: Table 8 illustrates target-setting patterns for PATs and diploma exams (based on the *close-ended* questions posed in the AERR summaries). The data indicate that between half and

three quarters of the jurisdictions based their targets on provincial standards. In addition, the data show that jurisdictions use combinations of the listed targets. By and large the jurisdictions set overall targets (mirroring, for example, provincial standards) and schools set their own targets, which normally must reflect an upward trend to show improvement and ensure that jurisdiction targets are supported.

Table 8 – Benchmarking Achievement Results (Goal 2)

	%
PAT results based on those writing reported in comparison to:	
• school jurisdiction targets	50%
• provincial results	77%
• provincial standards	77%
PAT results cohort reported in comparison to:	
• school jurisdiction targets	42%
• provincial results	63%
• provincial standards	56%
Diploma Exams results reported in comparison to:	
• school jurisdiction targets	42%
• provincial results	74%

Target setting procedures will have greater significance in the emerging accountability pillar under the Renewed Funding Framework. Therefore, a survey of six, more recent (2002-03) school board AERRs was undertaken to get a sense of the current state of target setting procedures. This data has been organized using two separate formats and is presented in Figures 2 and 3. Figure 2 relates results to the previous years targets, while Figure 3 stresses the 01-02 results in relationship to the next years targets and accentuates the difference. These figures provide examples of how targets/results might be reported. They also demonstrate that of the six randomly selected boards only one sets its targets based on jurisdiction performance and hence more accurately and meaningfully reflects the local context.

Figure 2
Review of PAT Language Arts Cohort Results Compared to Jurisdiction Targets for Six Randomly Selected Jurisdictions

Sample of Jurisdictions		Targets 01-02	*Results 01-02	Targets 02-03	*Results 02-03
Jurisdiction from Zone 1	gr. 3	84/8	**83/6 ▼▼	84/8	**83/6 ▼▼
	gr. 6	76/11	**75/8 ▼▼	76/11	**74/9 ▼▼
	gr. 9	82/9	**82/7 =▼	82/9	**79/8 ▼▼
Jurisdiction from Zone 2/3	gr. 3	85/15	90.3/17.4 ▲▲	85/15	88.5/16.2 ▲▲
	gr. 6	85/15	85.5/15.5 ▲▲	85/15	87.7/17.7 ▲▲
	gr. 9	85/15	88.4/15.7 ▲▲	85/15	79.1/10.9 ▼▼
Jurisdiction from Zone 2/3	gr. 3	85/15	92.2/24.4 ▲▲	85/15	93.3/25.1 ▲▲
	gr. 6	85/15	91.3/23.3 ▲▲	85/15	88.6/24.2 ▲▲
	gr. 9	85/15	85.7/14.7 ▲▼	85/15	90.0/15.4 ▲▲
Jurisdiction from Zone 4	gr. 3	85/15	88.1/12.5 ▲▼	90/15	84.3/17.8 ▼▲
	gr. 6	85/15	86.2/12.2 ▲▼	85/15	82.9/14.6 ▼▼
	gr. 9	85/15	81.2/11.6 ▼▼	85/10	80.6/7.9 ▼▼
Jurisdiction from Zone 5	gr. 3	85/15	85.0/19.1 =▲	85/15	86.9/19.9 ▲▲
	gr. 6	85/15	86.6/17.5 ▲▲	85/15	88.1/20.7 ▲▲
	gr. 9	85/15	83.8/17.1 ▼▲	85/15	85.5/17.4 ▲▲
Jurisdiction from Zone 6	gr. 3	85/15	79.9/13.5 ▼▼	85/15	85.1/16.4 ▲▲
	gr. 6	85/15	73.2/10.4 ▼▼	85/15	78.6/17.1 ▼▲
	gr. 9	85/15	78.8/12.5 ▼▼	85/15	81.8/19.8 ▼▲

*Cohort results estimated by multiplying results limited to those writing by the participation rate (i.e., results were weighted by participation rates).

** Based on previous 5 year average

▲ Results exceeded target; = Results equaled target; ▼ Results did not meet target

Figure 3

Comparisons of PAT Cohort Targets to Jurisdiction Results for Six Randomly Selected Jurisdictions

Sample of Jurisdictions		Subject	*Results 01-02 (accept./excellence)	Targets 02-03 (accept./excellence)	*** ▲ = ▼	Difference (targets – results)
Jurisdiction from Zone 1	gr. 3	Language Arts	**83/6	84/8	▲ ▲	1/2
	gr. 6	Language Arts	**75/8	76/11	▲ ▲	1/3
	gr. 9	Language Arts	**82/7	82/9	= ▲	0/2
Jurisdiction from Zone 2/3	gr. 3	Language Arts	90.3/17.4	85/15	▼ ▼	-5.3/-2.4
	gr. 6	Language Arts	85.5/15.5	85/15	▼ ▼	-0.5/-0.5
	gr. 9	Language Arts	88.4/15.7	85/15	▼ ▼	-3.4/-0.7
Jurisdiction from Zone 2/3	gr. 3	Language Arts	92.2/24.4	85/15	▼ ▼	-7.2/-9.4
	gr. 6	Language Arts	91.3/23.3	85/15	▼ ▼	-6.3/-8.3
	gr. 9	Language Arts	85.7/14.7	85/15	▼ ▲	-0.7/0.3
Jurisdiction from Zone 4	gr. 3	Language Arts	88.1/12.5	90/15	▲ ▲	1.9/2.5
	gr. 6	Language Arts	86.2/12.2	85/15	▼ ▲	-1.2/2.8
	gr. 9	Language Arts	81.2/11.6	85/10	▲ ▼	3.8/-1.6
Jurisdiction from Zone 5	gr. 3	Language Arts	85.0/19.1	85/15	= ▼	0/-4.1
	gr. 6	Language Arts	86.6/17.5	85/15	▼ ▼	-1.6/-2.5
	gr. 9	Language Arts	83.8/17.1	85/15	▲ ▼	1.2/-2.1
Jurisdiction from Zone 6	gr. 3	Language Arts	79.9/13.5	85/15	▲ ▲	5.1/1.5
	gr. 6	Language Arts	73.2/10.4	85/15	▲ ▲	11.8/4.6
	gr. 9	Language Arts	78.8/12.5	85/15	▲ ▲	6.2/2.5

*Cohort results estimated by multiplying results limited to those writing by the participation rate (i.e., results were weighted by participation rates).

** Based on previous 5 year average

***▼ means targets are set below prior results; ▲ means targets are set above prior results

Learners complete programs: Using results to inform future planning

Although a number of jurisdictions expressed satisfaction with their results, the general impression from the answers to the question shown in Table 9 was that program completion is a priority area (i.e., even if completion rates are above provincial average or at a “satisfactory” level, they might be “still below what is desired”).

Table 9 - Responses to “How do you use these results to inform future planning?” (Goal 2) n (%)

Using results for strategizing/drawing school improvement plans	14 (23%)
Using student achievement and participation data (specifically mentioned) for planning	13 (21%)
Using completion data (specifically mentioned) for planning	10 (16%)
Using results to “establish appropriate programming strategies”	14 (23%)
Using results for identifying “priority” subjects/grades	8 (13%)
Providing/enhancing non-instructional supports to students	5 (8%)

Using result analysis in planning: Not surprisingly, some jurisdictions (13 or 21%) discussed improving student success in program completion in the context of analyzing student achievement results and participation rates. Jurisdictions frequently referred to school and teacher-based analysis of results, implying, thereby, the importance of conducting quality local assessments and teachers understanding “the information that can be gleaned from assessment data.” One of the jurisdictions stressed specifically the utility of ATRAC2 program for analyzing the data. “Trends, strengths, and weaknesses are really evident (as a result of ATRAC analysis). Teachers are shown in which topics their students did well, and in which topics they didn’t. Teachers use this information for planning future lessons and courses. Principals use this information for their school action plans.”

Only a small number of jurisdictions, however, (10 or 16%) referred directly to *completion rates*. The jurisdiction responses give the impression that reporting on completion in 2001-02 was still a relatively new and “unexplored” domain for a notable proportion of jurisdictions. Data in Table 4 confirms this conclusion, showing only 65% of the jurisdictions reporting on high school completion rates in 2001-02. Four jurisdictions mentioned using “charts on completion rates” from Alberta Learning. There was a testimonial of a great utility of Alberta Learning Completion Rates data, but an opinion was also expressed that reporting on completion rates is not necessary for the jurisdictions, since “Alberta Learning has this information on its website.” In all, the AERR summaries are somewhat ambiguous on reporting on high school completion and this issue needs to be clarified.

Strategizing / drawing school improvement plans: Around a quarter of the jurisdictions (23%) touched upon using results for developing strategies and (action) plans for improving program completion. Specific strategies mentioned were somewhat interrelated and included addressing literacy issues at all levels of schooling; early detection of “at risk” students; addressing achievement issues in certain subjects and grades; and establishing “appropriate programming strategies” (see sections below). An apt example of identifying best practices “in order to set system standards” is senior administration working with principals on analysis of successful strategies and programs.

Using results to “establish appropriate programming strategies:” As commented by 23% of the jurisdictions, programming remains an important means of addressing high school completion rates. Apart from providing diverse/alternate programs for students, an “appropriate programming strategy” presumes ensuring students are in the right programs/courses and complete the courses chosen, as well as conducting formal program reviews in order to provide a good indication of their effectiveness. The following initiatives were mentioned by the jurisdictions as contributing to high school/program completion:

- early identification of reading and writing problems and focusing on literacy at all levels;
- expanding support to students at risk through off campus programs, outreach., etc.;
- increasing CTS offerings to promote education relevancy;
- integrating of technology in Virtual program;
- supporting career counseling and Advanced Placement program; pursuing partnerships with others in the area of “careers.”
- Outreach programming assisting learners with high school completion was mentioned most frequently.

Using results to identify “priority” subjects/grades: By analogy with the answers to the first open-ended question (Table 9), jurisdictions brought up the issue of “deficiencies” in particular subject areas, mostly (high school) math, that “still require direct support for improvement.” Increasing teacher capacity in mathematic instruction (e.g., aligning learning to specific curriculum focus), looking at the delivery of high school math in small schools and partnering with a local college to provide transition courses for grades 4 – 9, senior high math and Diploma prep courses were mentioned as concrete examples of addressing this issue.

Providing/enhancing non-instructional supports to students: Other, non-instructional, forms of working with students to assist them in high school completion were stressed by 8% of the jurisdictions. Supports mentioned include various school counseling (e.g., ensuring junior and senior high students are placed in proper academic programs and providing “student and family support for success” through Family School Liaison Counselors, Native Liaison Workers and so on). In addition, high school tracking of students and conducting exit interviews with those who are leaving school prior to completion helps to recognize/address issues and ensure students are not falling through cracks.

Local Performance Measures Reported by Jurisdictions for Goal 2

In total, 40% of jurisdictions reported on local performance measures for Goal 2 (Table 10). Examples of a broad assortment of performance measures are detailed in Table 10. (Please note that *not all* jurisdictions that reported on their local performance measures provided specific examples).

Table 10 – Examples of Local Performance Measures (Goal 2)

Type of Measures	Sample Measures	n (%)
Various program statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of students in off-campus programs • (Number/percentage of) tech prep graduations • Outreach statistics • Results in International Baccalaureate (IB) and Advanced Placement (AP) • ELI and ESL results • Success rate of home education students • % of students registering and completing summer courses • Number of program evaluations a year 	8 (13%)
Statistics scholarships and other awards won by students (mostly Rutherford)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students eligible for/winning Rutherford Scholarships • (Number/percentage of students receiving) University of Alberta scholarships • (Number/percentage of students receiving) jurisdiction scholarships • (Number/percentage of students receiving) medals in Skills Canada competitions 	9 (15%)
Achievement tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results in Highest Level of Achievement Tests (HLAT) • PAT results for Hutterite Colony Schools 	2 (3%)
Various satisfaction measures	<p><u>Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student satisfaction with teachers • Student satisfaction with the variety/challenge in classroom/school activities • Student satisfaction with their results <p><u>Parent:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent satisfaction with teachers • Parent satisfaction with their school overall • Parent satisfaction with the quality of their child's education • Parent satisfaction with the variety/challenge in classroom/school activities • Parent satisfaction with religious education (Catholic Schools) 	8 (13%)
Other measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Students choosing education rate" (presumably % of students choosing either to finish high school or to continue with post-secondary studies) • Importance parents and students place on finishing Grade 12 • Number of evaluations of school a year • Tracking of graduates (college attended, etc.) 	4 (6%)

Highlights:

- ❑ *Concerns about achievement in specific subjects/grades* (especially in high school mathematics, but also Language Arts) were reiterated throughout AERR summaries for Goal 2. Investigating the factors impacting results, continuing with offering relevant/flexible programming and sharing/implementing successful practices are among strategies towards resolving this issue. The current steps towards improvement need to be a part of long-term strategizing and projecting long-term results.
- ❑ *The concept of viewing results strategically* (i.e., putting them in a long-term perspective) through systematic building of results "from bottom up" as an integral learning process parallels the idea of foreseeing long-term local/system trends that was expressed in AERR summaries for Goal 1.

- ❑ Only 65% of the jurisdictions reported on high school completion rates and relevant comments in the AERR summaries leaned towards the achievement results rather than focusing on completion rates. Therefore, reporting on high school completion appears to be an issue that needs further attention.
- ❑ The data indicates that at least half of jurisdictions do not use jurisdiction standards in setting their targets for student achievement.

GOAL 3 – WELL PREPARED LEARNERS FOR LIFELONG LEARNING, WORLD OF WORK AND CITIZENSHIP

The following is a summary of jurisdictions' answers to the question **“How do you use your (AERR) results to influence your strategic planning?”** with regard to provincial Goal 3 (Table 11).

Table 11 - Responses to “How do you use these results to influence ...?” (Goal 3) **n (%)**

Using results for reviewing/improving/increasing programs and course offerings	31 (50%)
Reinforcing student learning/program offerings through consulting/counseling/PD	10 (16%)
Developing diversified partnerships to insure program implementation	9 (15%)
Using results to identify issues and focus on them	9 (15%)
Using results for working on various planning developments/initiatives	7 (11%)

Using results for various planning developments/initiatives: Eleven percent (11%) of the jurisdictions referred to the planning process as a whole. Innovative initiatives/developments in this area included:

- changing “the whole planning process” paralleling significant changes in the system of delivery of education, which will result in a more division-wide focus;
- “doing a better job because of strategic planning cycle set by the board;” and
- *transition planning* for students to school, between schools and beyond school.

Working on various programs and developing partnerships: As many as half (50%) of the jurisdictions stressed using the results for programming/course development to identify the needs, enhance school readiness in young children and make sure graduates are prepared for post-secondary studies and work (Table 11). Consistent with the previous, 2000-01 AERR summary, jurisdictions by and large indicated successes/progress in programming rather than issues (see Table 12 for examples). Statements like “continue with present programs,” “continue to enhance all programs – academic to vocational,” “programs are increasing” and so on, indicate that many needed programs could be already in place, a foundation in this area has been laid and many jurisdictions are currently in the reviewing and refining stage of program building (i.e., finding out what works best and adjusting to the emerging needs). However, a limited number of jurisdictions noted that “preparation of learners remains a challenge” for them.

Table 12 – Examples of Programs Launched by the Jurisdictions (Goal 3)

School readiness in young children	Preparation for work	Citizenship / character development	Other programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Start • Early entry • Brighter Future / Brighter Beginnings • Delay Start • Pre-kindergarten • Full-day kindergarten • High needs (full-day) ECS • ELI, including Parents as Teachers program • Entrance PUF programs • ESL programs • Language development program for four year olds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP and other work-experience programs • (Employability) portfolio programs • CTS • School/Career Transitions program in Junior High • Developing Career Centers for the high school • Tech Prep • Green Certificate • IOP with a focus on vocational and life skills • Careers Next Generations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character-based citizenship initiative (K – 12) • Social Justice • Community Service • Safe and Caring Schools • SADD • DARE • Lion's Quest • Christian service and leadership (Catholic schools) • 21st Century High School Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHIP services • Special needs • AISI

Table 12 Acronyms: ESC - Early Childhood Services; PUF - Program Unit Funding; RAP – Registered Apprenticeship Program; CTS Career and Technology Studies; IOP – Integrated Occupation Program; SADD – Students Against Destructive Decisions; DARE – Drug Abuse Resistance Education; SHIP – Student Health Initiative Program; AISI – Alberta Initiative for School Improvement.

The jurisdictions associated programming for Goal 3 with different forms of partnerships. Some of the latter were large-scale interregional ventures, such as partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions in career programs for secondary students, participating in Chinook Career Transitions for Youth Project (which is a cooperative venture of all south western Alberta providing career counseling “in the broadest sense”) and using the assistance from the Alberta Regional Consortia. Other partnerships mentioned included working in cooperation with the University of Calgary, colleges and education centers, industry and community agencies (e.g., in early intervention).

Using results for reinforcing programs through consulting / counseling and professional development:

Sixteen percent (16%) of the jurisdictions stressed different forms of “adding value” to programs by utilizing consultant services and through professional development (PD). The examples included employing a full-time Career Transitions Consultant, having a consultant working with pre-kindergarten and day care, an early intervention specialist developing “a scope and sequence curriculum” for special needs preschool students, forming an Early Literacy Team guided by a reading specialist, employing an educational consultant to ensure instruction accommodates each school needs, having a PUF Home-School Liaison Worker and so on. An array of professional development initiatives for teachers ranged from providing PD for kindergarten teachers and support to new teachers (through University of Calgary) to adding Professional Development Days to teachers’ calendar in order to support creation of a Learning Community.

Highlights: Issues/challenges identified as a result of data analyses

- ❑ ***Preparedness of learners:*** Preparing children for learning was the challenge most frequently mentioned by the jurisdictions (accounts such as: “Preparing children for learning is seen as a major challenge for the jurisdiction;” “...The jurisdiction has no influence on education before kindergarten...;” “The Division’s results for ‘children are ready to learn’ [i.e., kindergarten and grade 1] did not achieve the targets;” and so on). Continuing working on programs (including using AISI) and partnerships were mentioned as avenues for resolving this issue. Limitations of servicing dispersed populations was cited as one of the reasons for the problem mentioned.
- ❑ ***Performance measures and results evaluation:*** Jurisdictions’ answers implied that there could be some issues with measuring Goal 3 outcomes. First, when asked to provide overall assessment of

their results, six jurisdictions (10%) reported “insufficient data,” whereas there were no such comments for Goal 2 and only two comments for Goal 1. Second, statements such as: “Measures for Goal 3 are described in the Three Year Plan but are not reported in the AERR;” “Data for 3 of these measures (outlined in the AERR summary) are being collected for the first time this year” and “None of the listed PM are directly referenced” might be indicative of issues with measuring the results.

GOAL 4 – EFFECTIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARTNERS

With respect to Goal 4, a majority of the jurisdictions did not answer the question “**How do you use your results to influence your strategic planning?**” directly, but mostly focused on specifics of the partnerships (see “Attributes of the partnerships,” in Table 13 and examples in Table 14).

Table 13 –Summary of jurisdictions comments for Goal 4

	n (%)
<i>Responses to “How do you use these results to influence strategic planning?”</i>	
Using results for making decisions on sustaining partnerships and initiating improvements	11 (18%)
Using results for monitoring/assessing partnerships and identifying issues/priorities	6 (10%)
<i>Attributes of the partnerships:</i>	
Partnering with neighboring jurisdictions	6 (10%)
Utilizing already existing infrastructure and links for to benefit from partnerships	7 (11%)

Using results to influence strategic planning

General accounts of using the results in planning for Goal 4 were as follows: “Results are reviewed, trends and issues are identified and action plans to improve the results are put into place.” “We study the results and undertake improvements and/or allocate resources where deemed necessary” (Table 13).

Surveys were mentioned as a way to measure “community and agency relationships.” Available examples concerned mostly special needs related parent satisfaction with: support services their children received, access to services, programs and achievement/progress of their children, opportunities to be involved in decisions, etc. Few specific accounts of *issues* were partners pulling out of the program leaving the jurisdiction struggling to continue to the end of the year, parents being dissatisfied with local partnerships, great energy expended in discussion and negotiation, lack of human resources (for SHIP) and so on. The jurisdictions emphasized the need for both building upon the existing partnerships and initiating improvements and expansions (e.g., through increasing community knowledge of the Division’s philosophy, goals, culture and programs, exploring various alternatives and initiatives, etc.). In addition, there were the following specific suggestions to the government regarding improvement of learning partnerships:

- It is recommended that the government develop a framework for intergovernmental departments to work together to improve services for children.
- “Alberta Learning needs to ensure that its documents do not hold school authorities accountable for services they do not control.”

Attributes of the partnerships

Evidence provided by the jurisdictions attests to a well-developed system of learning partnerships throughout the province, distinguished by a variety of forms and levels of collaboration, including formal versus informal, short or long duration and internal versus external partnering. The following additional attributes of these partnerships are worth noting:

- Ten percent (10%) of the jurisdictions reported partnering with other jurisdictions (e.g., Catholic boards collaborating with public boards) in the areas such as summer and outreach schools, gifted

program, joint transportation initiatives, sharing facilities and common professional development events. Some partnerships involved as many as six jurisdictions.

- Ten percent (10%) of the jurisdictions reported utilizing already available infrastructure and links to reap partnering benefits. The examples include encouraging a high level of trustee involvement with the community, intense use of liaison personnel, who are “frequently in a better position to provide liaison with other agencies than others are,” developing “further relationships within the school community,” and continuing initiatives with The Alberta Regional Consortia, Alberta Home and School Councils’ Association (AHSCA) and Alberta Teachers’ Association (ATA).
- Finally, the “giving back” (two-way) aspect of partnering was conveyed (i.e., focusing on what students/schools can in turn do for a partner). Examples include all jurisdiction’s grade 12 students participating in community service as a graduation requirement and a Francophone authority offering its expertise in language teaching.

Table 14 – Examples of Partnerships and Programs to Improve Coordination of Services to Students

Businesses and communities	Families	Public sector and other agencies	Post-secondary sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacts with business community and the Chamber of Commerce for RAP placements • Working with band councils • Involvement in the Community Careers Co-operative • Gifted/talented students matched with community mentors <p><u>Partnerships with:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alpac, ESSO, Conference Board of Canada, Xerox, Hewlett Packard, Exxon Mobil, etc. (for technology learning and other projects) • City recreational groups • Local radio station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents can be involved in decision-making at both the school and system levels through School Councils • Parents providing input through IPPs 	<p><u>Partnerships through /with:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHIP • AISI • RCMP • Alberta Children’s Initiative • HRE • ATA • Regional Consortia • Health groups and the United Way • French-Canadian association (ACFA) 	<p><u>Partnerships with:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olds College • Red Deer College • Young Adult Learning Program • Masters Program through the University of San Diego • Research and PD initiatives with the University of Lethbridge

Table 14 Acronyms: RAP – Registered Apprenticeship Program; IPP – Individual Program Plan; SHIP – Student Health Initiative Program; AISI – Alberta Initiative for School Improvement; HRE – (Alberta) Human Resources and Employment; ATA – Alberta Teachers’ Association.

Highlights

- ❑ In all jurisdictions’ comments give an impression that partnerships are working well. There were only few issues mentioned. Apart from getting services for schools and students, the partnerships contribute to “many minds solving problems together” (i.e., stakeholders and community partners contributing to divisional plans and priorities).

Jurisdictions’ Suggestions Regarding Performance Measures and Result Analysis (Goals 1 – 4)

The following items did not fall exactly into the themes discussed separately for each of the provincial goals, however, when assembled together offer an additional insight into the jurisdictions’ needs with respect to the data collection and result analysis.

- Would like to see Alberta Learning pursue alternative ways to collect data regarding “financial need not a barrier” (Goal 1 – note that this measure subsequently has been deleted as a provincial requirement).
- Jurisdiction finds data from Alberta Learning on Completion Rates very valuable. Also jurisdictions report that the “Prior Levels of Achievement” information is very useful. Would ask that this analysis be extended to Social Studies and Science at grade 9 (Goal 2).
- Alberta Learning assistance in developing a chart layout for PAT results has been appreciated (Goal 2).
- Alberta Learning provide leadership to develop an additional measurement tool covering ELI students achieving acceptable standards (Goal 3).
- Measuring partners’ satisfaction with the relationships is resource consuming. “Evidence in resources and overall students achievement” is a better way to assess value of partnerships and joint initiatives to the jurisdiction (Goal 4).

LOCAL GOALS

Fifty five percent (55%) out of 62 jurisdictions reported on local goals (Table 5) and provided extensive specific accounts of the latter in the AERR summaries. Upon grouping individual jurisdiction goals according to the nine underlying major topics (Table 15), it becomes clear that local goals are reflective of both provincial goals (dimensions such as *High quality education*, *Productive and diversified learning partnerships* and *Smooth student transition to work and post-secondary*) and, as expected, of local needs and priorities (*Promote Catholic education*, *Adequate learning infrastructure* and so on). Providing high quality education opportunities, promoting Catholic education and providing safe, caring and inviting learning environments were three most frequently mentioned goals.

Table 15 – Examples of Local Goals

Targeted Area(s)	Sample Goals	n
High quality education including quality learning opportunities for special needs students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching in Alberta is consistently of high quality. • High quality learning programs – success for all learners. • Promote public education. • A Students First! focus that ensures high learner expectations for success and assists learners to realize their full potential. • Quality Learning and Working Environments. • In-service and implement new programs and assess existing programs suitability. • Maintain instructional focus. • Improve counseling services. • Improve educational opportunities for students who are members of unique populations. • Centres of Excellence established to complement ESL programs already in place. • Addressing student behavior and dropouts. 	13
Promote Catholic education and identity (Catholic boards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Catholic Education. • The Catholic/Christian identity ... is promoted. • ... Provide a variety of high quality learning opportunities permeated with the Catholic faith. 	11
Learning environments are safe, caring and inviting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain safe and caring schools. • Safe and inviting learning and working environments within the Jurisdiction. • Provide a safe, caring, healthy working environment, including opportunities to work collaboratively. • Schools are aligned to provide a secure safe learning environment for all students, in which students safely explore a range of interests and opportunities, and develop leadership skills. 	9

Productive and diversified learning partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special education services are coordinated between the school and community agencies. • Establish effective learning partnerships that promote student success and collaborative decision making. • Strengthen communication with parents and the parental role in decision-making. • Liaison with School Councils. 	7
Information technology is integrated in learning and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Technology System throughout the jurisdiction for finance, communications and student reporting. • Information technologies integrated into education to enhance student learning and increase efficiency and flexibility of delivery. • International Media center (is developed) • All learners have access to technology to support quality learning. • Online high school courses, available throughout the year. 	7
Adequate learning infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate (school) facilities. • Address facilities needs ... • Facilities planning. • (Appropriate) transportation (system). 	6
Education systems are accountable at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly responsive and responsible jurisdiction. • (The jurisdiction is) open and accountable for the achievement of results and use of resources. • Students, staff and community will be aware that the jurisdiction has processes in place to effect improvement, and will be satisfied that the processes are effective. • Improve accountability. 	5
Smooth student transition to work and post-secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work experience for students. • Career development integration through all high school curricular. • Career plans, completed by all high school students. • Success stories after high school. • To prepare life long learners to become contributing, responsible citizens able to discern the value of work in a context of social justice. 	5
Human resources are developed and nurtured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and nurture human resources. • Attract and keep quality teachers / administrators. • Encourage and support the personal growth ... of all staff. • Recruit, develop and retain excellent staff. 	5

PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT OF SPECIFIC GROUPS OF STUDENTS RELATED TO PROVINCIAL INITIATIVES

School jurisdictions reported on the progress and achievements of specific groups of students related to provincial initiatives, including the Early Literacy Initiative, English as a Second Language programs, special needs programs and Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AIS) projects. School superintendents were asked, “overall, what is your assessment of the results achieved for these students,” and “how do you use your results to influence your strategic planning and support future improvement?” In response to this second question, 27% discussed the usefulness of the measures in celebrating and recognizing what had been successful, 35% discussed strategies, formats and programs that would be continued because of that success, and 69% discussed some of the adjustments they were working on to expand upon their success in the future. The responses to both of the two questions are summarized in Table 16.

Table 16 – Program Area Results and Implications

Student Group	Results (%)*	Implications
Early Literacy Measure reported* Yes 54 No 7	Measures indicate Improvement = 76% No change = 10% Decline = 2% Insufficient data / No Response = 13%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2001-2002, compared to the previous year, an equal percentage of jurisdictions believed that there had been an increase in achievement due to ELI. The previous year, boards reported that literacy gains were not all measured by provincial achievement tests. This was not reported in 2001-2002. Jurisdictions reported advances in reading levels, and the ones that commented on PATs indicated that the Early Literacy initiative was making a difference. As one jurisdiction put it, “advances in literacy benefit everything else done in school.” One of the jurisdictions reported that as a result of their Early Literacy program, fewer students in the higher grade levels were in need of assistance. Another jurisdiction is planning on building upon their success by expanding the program to a broader range of children.
English as a Second Language (ESL) Measure reported* Yes 41 No 15	Measures indicate Improvement = 44% No change = 31% Decline = 0% Insufficient data / No Response = 26%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As there is often a small number of ESL students in a school jurisdiction, the most common method of handling ESL programming seems to be the creation of individualized programs for students. While the percentage who reported that their measures show an improvement in ESL has decreased (42% this year vs. 52% last year), in their comments, jurisdictions report satisfaction that results show increasing levels of achievement for ESL students. Jurisdictions are using their previous results to adjust programming strategies and in-servicing in order to meet the needs of ESL students. One jurisdiction reported that this is a growing population for them.
Special Needs Measure reported* Yes 56 No 4	Measures indicate Improvement = 76% No change = 15% Decline = 2% Insufficient data / No Response= 8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several of the boards are working on new assessment measures. Many are also using a broad range of initiatives to improve achievement of special needs students (including professional development, handbook development, the use of external resources/partnerships, integration, segregation, revised funding allocation, etc.). One jurisdiction expressed concern that the cost of assessing this area exceeded the amount of benefit obtained.
Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI) Measure reported* Yes 55 No 7	Measures indicate Improvement = 92% No change = 6% Decline = 0% Insufficient data / No Response= 2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jurisdictions continue to speak very enthusiastically about AISI. AISI projects have been influential in increasing the focus on ways to improve learning by building in best practices. Many jurisdictions are doing this, in part, by investing in professional development. Projects addressing needs related to literacy and math appear to be the most common. It was also very common for jurisdictions to combine certain initiatives, primarily AISI with Early Literacy. Several jurisdictions are working on the development of new measures to reflect achievement.
Student Health Measure reported* Yes 46 No 16	Measures indicate Improvement = 60% No change = 23% Decline = 2% Insufficient data / No Response = 16%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the Student Health Initiative is reportedly making a difference (parents, the community, and schools all see the initiative as being successful), the need is sometimes greater than can be met by the often limited services and funding. In response to this, some jurisdictions are trying to cut back on the services that are offered, while others are attempting themselves to offer services not offered through the health authority. Jurisdictions are also working on improving their partnerships.

* The number of responses do not total to 62 (the total number of jurisdictions), as this question was left blank on a number of the summary forms.

** In some cases percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Summary

Based on their spontaneous descriptions of effectiveness and success, school board representatives perceive Early Literacy and AISI as being the most effective initiatives, followed by programs for special needs students, the Student Health Initiative and ESL. When the jurisdictions were asked whether they had seen improvement, no change or a decline in achievement related to each of the initiatives, this was

confirmed. Jurisdictions have seen more improvement in relation to both AISI and Early Literacy compared to ESL, where the least improvement was perceived.

PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT RELATED TO SPECIFIC PLANS

Jurisdictions rates of compliance for including highlights of their Capital/Facilities, Technology, and Teacher Growth/In-service Plans were quite high, and ranged from 82.3% for the latter two to 87.1% for the Capital/Facilities Plan.

Jurisdictions were asked about their progress and achievement related to these specific plans. They were asked how their Capital/Facilities, Technology, and Teacher Growth/In-service plans, and any other plans they wanted to comment on, supported or enhanced student learning. They were also asked about any implications for future planning.

Capital/Facilities Plan:

Representatives from the jurisdictions most commonly felt that their Capital/Facilities Plans supported student learning by improving programming (27.4% of the jurisdictions mentioned this). It was mentioned that capital projects have been used to enhance physical education, Career and Technology Studies (CTS), and Integrated Occupation Program (IOP), in addition to providing the temperature controlled climate necessary in computer labs. Capital projects were also viewed as providing a physical environment that is conducive to productive learning (mentioned by 21.0%). It is felt that students require bright, airy spaces to maximize concentration and time on task. This in turn optimizes learning. Also important in the minds of jurisdiction representatives was the health and safety of students (mentioned by 19.4%). These jurisdictions used their Capital budgets to improve the health and safety of buildings and equipment. Enhancing air quality was mentioned as being an important project related to student health. Finally, some of the jurisdictions were using capital funding to address space issues (16.1% mentioned this). Several jurisdictions discussed the need for increased space due to population increases, and that capital projects allowed for further utilization of their existing space.

The jurisdictions felt that several key areas had implications for their future plans. First of all, they felt that changing demographics would have an impact. Jurisdictions are examining utilization rates and facility capacities in order to gauge the need for new facilities or work to existing ones to maximize usable space. They are examining the implications of programming needs to determine whether additional space or equipment is needed to allow for specific programming needs (CTS, online programs, academies for sports and fine arts, etc.). Finally, they are dealing with the implications of receiving funding from the province. Several jurisdictions (16.0%) discussed problems related to funding and the process necessary to obtain it. They voiced concerns about the stability and reliability of funding, the adequacy of funding, funding equity, delays in decision making/approval and implementation, and unrealistic submission timelines.

Technology Plans:

The primary way that Technology Plans are supporting learning is by enhancing the ability of students to work towards ICT outcomes, as well as learn the core curricula, primarily through increasing the resources available to them (mentioned by 30.6% of jurisdictions). One jurisdiction described the impact of technology on student learning quite broadly, by explaining that it “engages students in meaningful, real world connected activities that demand critical, creative and complex ways of thinking.” Many jurisdictions discussed the impact that Technology Plans were having on teachers skill levels and their ability to integrate technology into the curriculum (mentioned by 17.7%). This then influences the way that students are able to learn. Also key to the equation is accessibility of the technology, both for students and teachers (mentioned by 14.5%). Students need access to the resources if they are to benefit

from them, and equity of access is an important factor. Finally, some of the jurisdictions mentioned ways that their plans were supporting enhanced programming (10.0%). Jurisdictions indicated that through using technology, they are better able to provide more individualized, learner centered programs. For example, technology can be used to aid in the implementation of programs for gifted students in small schools and can be used in split grade level classes to enhance learning.

Several implications for future planning were identified. While some of the jurisdictions are at the beginning stage of technology implementation, others are taking steps to build on the progress that has already been made. Jurisdictions mentioned the need for further training for staff so that they can become more comfortable with the integration of technology into the curriculum. Expanded access is the focus of several other jurisdictions. However, funding remains an issue for several of the jurisdictions. Concern was expressed for the adequacy of future funding levels for technology. One jurisdiction discussed how they are using standard software and hardware throughout the jurisdiction in order to try to minimize their costs. Another felt uncertain of how much technology actually impacts student learning, and suggested that Alberta Learning take the lead in investigating this.

Teacher Growth/In-service Plans:

Jurisdictions recognized the importance of Teacher Growth/In-service Plans in enhancing staff capacity to provide better quality teaching (21% mentioned this directly). As one jurisdiction so aptly put it, “student learning benefits from teachers who are continually growing professionally.” Through professional development teachers are equipped with new ways to ensure that learning takes place, and in doing so, are themselves modeling lifelong learning. Many of the jurisdictions also indicated that Teacher Growth Plans supported student learning by supporting specific school and jurisdiction goals and priorities (mentioned by 21%). One jurisdiction felt that although professional development was expensive (mainly because of the cost of hiring substitutes), it was well worth it.

Although the jurisdictions’ responses show that they are supportive of professional development, consistent implications were not described by the jurisdictions for future planning related to Teacher Growth/In-service Plans. However, a small number of jurisdictions identified that they will be expanding their professional development with the next AISI initiatives they’re working on. Others identified specific areas that they would like to focus development in (technology, literacy, leadership, Individual program Plan (IPP) development and French language instruction teacher training). One jurisdiction stated that they were unsure whether the results of professional development were worth it, but indicated that they are taking a proactive stance, and are investigating an alternative model to make professional development both efficient and effective, and are asking their staff for input that will shape this.

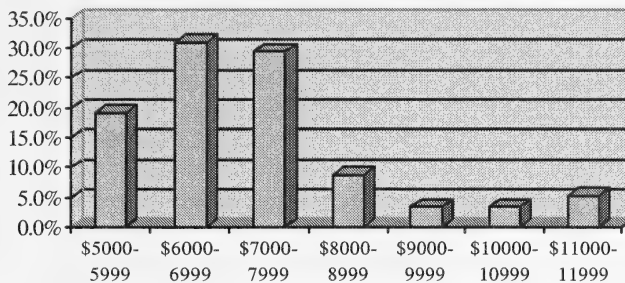
Summary

Jurisdictions indicate that all of their plans lead back to improving teaching and learning. Capital/Facilities, Technology, and Teacher Growth/In-service Plans are focused on enhancing programming and accomplishing jurisdictional (and in most cases provincial) priorities. Future plans focus on continuing to enhance these areas.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Compliance with financial reporting was high, with a summary for the year based on the AFS (Audited Financial Statement) provided by 98.4% of jurisdictions, total spending by program area provided by 93.5%, and information on where and how detailed budget/expenditure information can be obtained provided by 93.5%. The average amount of total spending per student per school was \$7264.96, for the 93.5% of jurisdictions that provided this information. The distribution of total funding per student per school between the jurisdictions is represented in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Percentage of jurisdictions reporting funding per student per school between \$5000 and \$11999



FUTURE CHALLENGES

In their reports, 83.9% of the jurisdictions included major concerns of issues their board had, compared to only 67.7% who included information on their priorities for improvement.

As part of their summaries, the jurisdictions were asked to summarize the nature of any major issues or concerns for the board, as well as their priorities for improvement. They were then asked what they felt the implications would be for board planning. Jurisdictions completed their summaries by indicating any overall future challenges, implications or suggestions they had for Alberta Learning.

Major Issues or Concerns for the Board: The jurisdictions identified a number of key concerns or issues that they felt were important. The key themes of their comments are presented in Table 17.

Table 17 – Jurisdictions' Comments Related to Major Issues or Concerns

Themes that emerged from the jurisdictions' comments:	N of Comments
Staffing / Relationship with Staff / Staff Development	31 (50%)
Programming	27 (44%)
Funding / Expenses	24 (39%)
Declining Enrollment	11 (18%)
Maintaining / Increasing Achievement	10 (16%)

The top concern that jurisdictions had was related to staffing, the relationship they had with staff, and staff development. Many of the jurisdictions indicated having problems recruiting and retaining staff, particularly staff specialized in certain areas, such as math, science, and French, as well as support staff. As part of their plans to address this situation, some recruitment campaigns will target specialized teachers, and one jurisdiction has produced a CD that they feel will help to promote their jurisdiction. One jurisdiction indicated that they are continuing to work with teacher preparation programs to ensure that they will get teachers who will meet their needs. Issues associated with the arbitrated settlement caused problems for some of the boards, who indicated that it meant a loss of teachers and lower morale among those remaining. The boards are planning on addressing this by focusing on relationship building and implementing activities that are hoped to improve morale. Some of the jurisdictions mentioned

professional development as an issue they'll be addressing in the coming years, both in terms of the types and number of opportunities available.

Programming was another area the jurisdictions focused on. Efforts to maintain and improve the quality and variety of programs, including alternative ones, were emphasized. Alternative programs are being investigated and pursued by several boards as part of their planning process. Programming for students with special needs (both learning challenges and behavioural problems) was discussed as a challenge. One way that its being addressed by future planning is by the connections that boards are trying to make with agencies to link students with the supports that they need. Programming for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, Kanadier Mennonite students, rural students, and a growing population of ESL students was mentioned as an area that several boards were working on addressing.

Issues of funding and increasing costs were also important to a number of the jurisdictions. They discussed the high costs of utilities, and lack of funds to cover technology (access, professional development for teachers, support and evergreening), transportation, facility operations and maintenance, classroom instruction (particularly with increasing numbers of special needs students), and the implementation of new curricula. Jurisdictions are trying to be more realistic about resource planning.

Some of the boards discussed declining enrolment as being a concern that they were trying to deal with, in terms of studying the viability of their schools, and looking towards alternative types of programming, such as online courses or videoconferencing. The main concern that others are addressing is attempting to maintain or improve student achievement. This is reflected in the planning process with emphasis placed on specialized programs (such as ELI), professional development, and alternative programming.

Priorities for Improvement: The jurisdictions are working on many of their issues and concerns as priorities for improvement. For example, rebuilding relationships with staff, professional development, improving or developing and implementing specialized programming (early literacy, or programming for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, for example), and improving student achievement. Some of the priorities align specifically with provincial priorities such as improving achievement in secondary mathematics, improving access to technology, or improving the satisfaction ratings of students, staff, parents, and the public.

Suggestions for Alberta Learning: Suggestions related to funding were the most frequent suggestions voiced by jurisdictions. Many suggestions also related to programming. Jurisdictions urged the province to collaborate with them on curriculum changes and making the changes slow and deliberate. They also requested Alberta Learning's assistance with the implementation. One jurisdiction felt that the transition from one math stream in grades 1 through 9 to three streams in grades 10 through 12 needed to be reviewed, and a few jurisdictions asked the province to re-examine whether the content in grade 9 math was developmentally appropriate for students of that age. Jurisdictions requested that Alberta Learning provide program advice and support to teachers with students who were not coded, and that the accuracy of baseline profiles for special needs students be given some consideration.

With relation to staffing and the relationships with teachers, jurisdictions had a few suggestions. First, they suggested that the province find a way to address the shortage of math and science teachers, as well as the specialist teacher shortage in rural areas. Some also suggested that the province find a way to address the shortage of potential administrators and speech therapists. Jurisdictions requested that support for professional development be a priority of Alberta Learning.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF JURISDICTIONS' ACCOUNTABILITY

The February 2001 *Guide to School Board Planning and Reporting* specified 33 performance measures or other reporting requirements be included for specific goal outcomes, specific groups of students, capital/facilities projects and financial data, compared to 31 requirements in the previous AERRs. Reporting on future challenges was a new requirement in 2001-02. If boards have very low or nil numbers of ESL or home education students, the maximum number of required measures can range from 31-33, hence a board with 94% compliance may in fact be comprehensively meeting its reporting obligations. Table 18 demonstrates the reporting requirements for 2000-01 and 2001-02.

To gauge the degree of congruence between the evaluation and reporting requirements in the *Guide* and the responsiveness of school boards, the number and percentages of reporting requirements in each board's 2000-01 and 2001-02 AERR was tabulated and is summarized in Table 19. As illustrated in Table 19, thirty-three school boards improved the comprehensiveness of their 2001-02 AERR's relative to Alberta Learning's reporting requirements. Twenty-four boards demonstrated lower compliance percentages, but nine only marginally, i.e. less than or equal to six percentage points difference compared to 2000-01. When the mean and standard deviation of the percentages in Table 19 are calculated, we see that the mean percent of compliance has increased from 83.4% in 2000-01 to 86% in 2001-02 while the standard deviation also increased from 14.5 to 15.0. It is clear that, overall, school boards are continuing to improve the comprehensiveness of their AERR's, but there is also a lack of consistency in meeting reporting requirements for some boards. Essentially, there is still room for improvement.

Table 18 – Required Reporting Items

2000-2001 AERR Summary	2001-2002 AERR Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G1-1: Learning system is responsive and flexible • G1-2: Learning system is accessible • G1-3: Learning system is affordable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G1-1: Learning system is responsive • G1-2: Learning system is flexible • G1-3: Learning system is accessible • G1-4: Financial need not a barrier • G1-5: Learning system is affordable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G2-1: Percentage of students who achieved acceptable/excellent standard in PAT • G2-2: Based on those writing (5 years) • G2-3: Based on the cohort (5 years) • G2-4: Reporting on home education • G2-5: Reporting on PAT targets • G2-6: Percentage of students who achieved jurisdictional targets on PAT • G2-7: Participation rates in PAT • G2-8: Percentage of students who achieved acceptable/excellent standard in diploma exams • G2-9: 5 years of results • G2-10: Percentage of students who achieved jurisdictional targets on diploma exams • G2-11: Participation rates in writing diploma exams • G2-12: Reporting on diploma exam targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G2-1: Percentage of students who achieved acceptable/excellent standard in PAT based on those writing (5 years) • G2-2: Reporting on PAT targets (based on those writing) • G2-3: Percentage of students who achieved acceptable/excellent standard in PAT based on the cohort (5 years) • G2-4: Reporting on PAT targets (based on cohort) • G2-5: Percentage of students who achieved acceptable/excellent standard in diploma exams • G2-6: 5 years of results • G2-7: Reporting on diploma exam targets • G2-8: Jurisdiction/provincial high school completion rates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G3-1: Children start ready to learn • G3-2: Lifelong learning • G3-3: World of work • G3-4: Citizenship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G3-1: Children start ready to learn • G3-2: Lifelong learning • G3-3: World of work • G3-4: Citizenship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G4-1: Partnerships • G4-2: Joint initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G4-1: Partnerships • G4-2: Joint initiatives

<u>Specific Groups of Students:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Literacy • ESL • Special Needs • AISI 	<u>Specific Groups of Students:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Literacy • ESL • Special Needs • AISI • Student Health
<u>Capital/Facility Projects:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress/completion • Enhance student learning 	<u>Progress on Specific Plans:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital/Facilities Plans • Technology Plans • Teacher Growth/In-service Plans
<u>Financial Summary:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spending Summary • Total spending per student • Operational spending per student • Information on detailed budget/expenditure 	<u>Financial Summary:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spending Summary • Total spending per student • Total spending by program area • Information on detailed budget/expenditure
N/A	<u>Future Challenges</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major issues/concerns • Priorities for improvement
Total: 31 items	Total: 33 items

Abbreviations: G1, G2, G3, G4 – Reporting on outcomes/measures for Provincial Goals 1,2,3 and 4.

Table 19 – Total Accountability Performance Measures Reported by Jurisdiction*

Z O N E	Jurisdictions	Sum		Z O N E	Jurisdictions	Sum		Z O N E	Jurisdictions	Sum	
		00/ 01 MAX =31	01/ 02 MAX =33			00/ 01 MAX =31	01/ 02 MAX =33			00/ 01 MAX =31	01/ 02 MAX =33
1	Fort Vermilion	27 87%	23 70%	2/3	St. Albert Prot	29 94%	30 91%	5	Christ the Redeemer	22 71%	29 88%
1	Peace River	25 81%	28 85%	2/3	St. Paul	30 97%	30 91%	5	Foothills	27 87%	21 64%
1	Northland	21 68%	27 82%	2/3	Elk Island Public	22 71%	32 97%	5	Prairie Land	19 61%	24 73%
1	Holy Family Catholic	30 97%	32 97%	2/3	Evergreen Catholic	26 84%	30 91%	5	Golden Hills	29 94%	33 100%
1	High Prairie	9 29%	20 61%	2/3	Lakeland Catholic	29 94%	31 94%	5	Rocky View	30 97%	31 94%
1	Grand Prairie Catholic	24 77%	27 82%	2/3	Living Waters	23 74%	32 97%	6	Medicine Hat Catholic	20 65%	30 91%
1	Grande Prairie Public	30 97%	29 88%	2/3	Northern Gateway	30 97%	12 36%	6	Medicine Hat Public	30 97%	30 91%
1	Peace Wapiti	15 48%	31 94%	2/3	St. Thomas Aquinas	26 84%	32 97%	6	Palliser	31 100%	33 100%
2/3	Elk Island Cath	25 81%	23 70%	2/3	Sturgeon	22 71%	28 85%	6	Prairie Rose	28 90%	33 100%
2/3	Black Gold	26 84%	31 94%	2/3	Wetaskiwin	30 97%	31 94%	6	Westwind	12 39%	33 100%
2/3	Buffalo Trail	21 68%	31 94%	2/3	Northern Lights	26 84%	31 94%	6	Grasslands	30 97%	30 91%
2/3	East Central AB Catholic	28 90%	29 88%	4	Battle River	31 100%	33 100%	6	Holy Spirit	28 90%	26 79%
2/3	Edmonton Catholic	24 77%	33 100%	4	Chinook's Edge	29 94%	32 97%	6	Horizon	29 94%	33 100%
2/3	Edmonton Public	27 87%	21 64%	4	Clearview	28 90%	33 100%	6	Lethbridge Public	29 94%	33 100%
2/3	Aspen View	19 61%	26 79%	4	Red Deer Public	29 94%	33 100%	6	Livingstone Range	31 100%	30 91%
2/3	Fort McMurray Cath.	25 81%	24 73%	4	Red Deer Catholic	29 94%	30 91%	F	East Central	26 84%	26 79%
2/3	Fort McMurray Public.	30 97%	11 33%	4	Wild Rose	26 84%	30 91%	F	Gr. Southern Public	18 58%	19 58%
2/3	Grande Yellowhead	25 81%	33 100%	4	Wolf Creek	28 90%	32 97%	F	Gr. Southern Catholic	25 81%	25 76%
2/3	Gr. St. Albert Catholic	28 90%	33 100%	5	Canadian Rockies	22 69%	25 76%	F	Northwest	24 77%	23 70%
2/3	Parkland	26 84%	25 76%	5	Calgary Catholic	27 87%	33 100%	F	Gr. North Central	30 97%	29 88%
2/3	Pembina Hills	29 94%	21 64%	5	Calgary Public	30 97%	32 97%				

* Total measures calculation exclude reporting on local goals. Some jurisdictions indicated measures such as home education or ESL as not applicable to them. Therefore, the maximum number of required measures for such jurisdictions can be two points less than the maximum number shown in the table; therefore, 94% or 97% may reflect full compliance with Department requirements for both 2000-01 and 2001-02.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The provincial priorities are fully represented in the school board 2001-02 AERRs. Based on the percent of boards reporting improvements from 2000-01 in each priority area, gains are observed for increasing high school completion rates, little change is reported in improving secondary student achievement in math or in local priorities, while declines are noted in improving coordination of services for children, improving access to information technology and in improving public satisfaction with education. Overall, no one area can be described as being sufficiently implemented so that it could be removed from the current list of priorities.
2. Reporting on provincial achievement tests results for the cohort (all students) and of high school completion rates are two key areas needing improvement.
3. For Goal 1:
 - Programming diversity appears to be one of the major focal points for jurisdictions and an ongoing challenge in the evolving education system with new needs arising, especially for students with special needs and for Aboriginal students.
 - Foreseeing long-term local, provincial and global trends in education is imperative for jurisdictions' strategic planning and could contribute to the awareness of and preparedness for the future developments and challenges.
4. For Goal 2:
 - Concerns about achievement in specific subjects/grades (especially in high school mathematics, but also in Language Arts) were reiterated throughout AERRs.
 - The data indicates that enhanced guidelines for jurisdictions' setting of contextually sensitive targets for student achievement would be useful.
5. For Goals 3 and 4:
 - Preparing children for learning was the challenge most frequently mentioned by the jurisdictions. Continuing work on programs, local initiatives, AISI projects, and partnerships were mentioned as avenues for resolving this issue.
 - In many jurisdictions, especially in the southern zones of the province, partnerships are diversified and working well.
6. School boards perceive Early Literacy and AISI as being the most effective program initiatives, followed by programs for special needs students, the Student Health Initiative and ESL. Jurisdictions have seen more improvement in relation to both AISI and Early Literacy compared to ESL, where the least improvement was observed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. More leadership in developing the readiness to learn strategies and outcomes will be needed from Alberta Learning to provide more focus and direction in this area.
2. A study to identify the factors that contribute to the high degree of successful Student Health Initiative partnerships in the three southern zones of the province should be undertaken.
3. ESL programming continues to provide a challenge for many school boards. This area should become a focus for research and development by Alberta Learning.
4. Continued emphasis should be placed on refinement and improvement of the reporting side of the accountability framework, especially the inclusion of provincial achievement data for student cohorts and high school completion rates. Likewise, target setting by school boards should become more reflective of local contexts and thereby more relevant to local planners. Alberta Learning should consider sponsoring in-service training sessions for jurisdiction staff to improve these reporting areas.

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